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(e) These regulations do not prevent informal consultation with selected Federal, State, and local governments and the public when such consultation is deemed appropriate in formulating Manual material.

§216.4 Determining the need for formal public review of proposed Manual directives.

(a) Agency officials responsible for formulating Manual directives containing applicable standards, criteria, and guidelines shall determine whether substantial public interest or controversy concerning a proposed Manual directive can be expected.

(b) The following shall be considered in making this determination:

(1) Direct written or oral communication with those known to be interested in the proposal;

(2) The degree to which the proposal is likely to adversely or beneficially affect the general public as well as those known to be interested in the proposal;

(3) The amount of change the proposal represents from current direction;

(4) The extent of recent news media coverage on subjects related to the proposal; and

(5) The amount of interest or controversy expressed on previous proposals on the same or similar subjects.

§216.5 Documentation.

The responsible Forest Service official shall document the results of the determination made pursuant to §216.4(b), and the reasons therefor, in a concise written summary. The summary may be combined with documentation required by NEPA procedures or other applicable law or policy. The summary shall be prepared and filed at the same location as the Forest Service official responsible for developing the Manual directive.

§216.6 Notice and comment procedures for proposed Manual directives identified for formal public review.

(a) Where it is determined that substantial public interest or controversy concerning a proposed Manual directive can be expected, the following minimum requirements for notifying

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the public and giving opportunity to comment on the proposal apply:

(1) *National Forest and Ranger District Proposals.* The responsible official shall determine appropriate means of notifying the public. This may include, but is not limited to, legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation or press release. The public shall have a minimum of 30 calendar days to review and comment on the proposal.

(2) *Regional, Station, and Area Proposals.* The responsible official shall determine appropriate means of notifying the public. This may include, but is not limited to, notice and summary of the proposal in the FEDERAL REGISTER, legal notice in one or more newspapers of general circulation, or press release. The public shall have a minimum of 30 calendar days to review and comment on the proposal.

(3) *National Proposals.* The responsible official shall publish a notice and summary of the proposal in the FEDERAL REGISTER, followed by a minimum of 60 calendar days for public review and comment.

(b) Agency officials will give direct notice to Federal, State, and local governments and to the public known to be interested in the proposal. Along with the notice, the responsible official shall also provide either a complete proposal or a summary of the proposal for review.

(c) The responsible Forest Service official may conduct additional public participation activities related to the proposed Manual directive as are deemed appropriate and necessary.

(d) Comments received from the public shall be analyzed and considered in the formulation and preparation of the final Manual directive.

(e) The final Manual directive or a summary shall be sent to those who offered comments on the proposed directive and further publicized as deemed appropriate by the responsible official.

§216.7 Exemption of proposed Manual directives from normal procedures.

When it is found for good cause that an exigency exists, an interim Manual directive that is determined to be of substantial public interest or expected controversy may be issued in advance of providing opportunity for public

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comment. However, as soon as practicable after issuance, the interim Manual directive will be made available for public review and comment as described in § 216.6. In making the Manual directive available, the responsible official shall state why the interim directive was issued prior to obtaining public comments.

§ 216.8 Availability of proposed Manual directives identified for formal public review.

As a minimum, review copies of proposed Manual directives determined to be of substantial public interest or expected controversy shall be available in the Forest Supervisor's Office and District Rangers' Offices when National Forest proposals are involved; in the Regional Office and Forest Supervisors' Offices when regional proposals are involved; and in Regional Offices and National Headquarters when national proposals are involved. When Manual directives involve Forest Service Research or State and Private Forestry programs, review copies shall be available at comparable administrative offices.

PART 219—PLANNING

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Subpart A—National Forest System Land and Resource Management Planning

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PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

§ 219.1 Purpose.

- (a) Land and resource management planning guides how the Forest Service